2: Maguire G-5 (ca. 1926) 1927-28
FL6 Dorobo FL6

IL-TOROBO

PART I

Being some Notes on the Various Types of *Dorobo*[1] found in the Masai Reserve of Tanganyika Territory and Contiguous Districts

The name Dorobo is a familiar one to almost every European in East Africa to-day. Nevertheless, beyond the fact that the Dorobo are commonly supposed to be a nomad tribe or clan of hunters living for the most part with, or near to the Masai, little would appear to be known about them. The Dorobo are referred to in many ethnical works of comparatively recent date, and they are mentioned in a number of books on African sport and travel, but I am unaware of any published work purporting to deal exclusively with these interesting people.

The following very incomplete notes on the Dorobo of Tanganyika Territory have been compiled from various sources,[2] but mainly from discussions with the Dorobo themselves, throughout Tanganyika Masailand. My chief informant has been "Jumbe" Lekite of the Talamai[3] *Il-Mósiro*. The death of this intelligent old man in July, 1926, deprived me of much interesting information.

During three years spent amongst the Masai I have had better opportunities than most people of getting to know the Dorobo. The peculiar conditions obtaining in a Station such as Kibaya, isolated in the middle of a vast area populated almost entirely

[1] I have called them *Dorobo* throughout, though it may be that certain writers would prefer *Andorobo* or *Wandorobo*. I think it will be agreed that the latter, at any rate, is inadmissible. I have clung to the name without a prefix, as these notes look, perforce, at the Dorobo through Masai eyes and the Masai: *Ol-Torróbôni*, *Il-Turóbo*, when shorn of the article, is prefixless. The initial D has been substituted for T as being more customary to the European ear.

[2] The authority consulted is quoted in every case.

[3] Talamai (or "Kijungu," as it is called by the Wangwa and Wanigua of Handeni and also by the inhabitants of the small Baoto settlement thereat, mainly Wasukuma) is a range of hills to the north of and overlooking the main Kondoa-Handeni road, about 43 miles east of Kibaya Station. Its map-reference is: C 3; Masai Steppe: I. II; 4; 3, 4. The name Talamai refers primarily to the hills, whereas Kijungu is the settlement.

2: Maguire G-5 (ca. 1926) 1927-28
FL6 Dorobo FL6

by nomads, necessitated the employment by my predecessor of Dorobo as guides on several occasions. Owing to their intimate knowledge of the more remote parts of the country, no better guides could be found. Thus, contact once made with these shy and elusive people, whose dormant distrust and fear of the European is quick to awake, cordial relations were speedily established mainly owing to the fact that we have always been willing, when possible, to employ them as trackers and hunters.

The early (and not original) discovery that all Dorobo are not alike and that some differ so widely from others as to appear to warrant the assumption that they have not a common origin encouraged me to further investigations. At the outset, however, it became apparent that I was twenty years too late. Many points, upon which it is obvious that further information is necessary before a conclusion can even be hazarded, still remain subjects for speculation. It is felt, however, that the result of my labours (undertaken because the matter interested me, and carried to their present incomplete stage because the interest grew) and the very tentative conclusions I have ventured to draw therefrom may have some interest to those qualified to speak with authority on matters of ethnology and philology.

Reference has been made to the Dorobo by Mr. Hobley,[1] who mentions the fact that previous to the arrival of the Masai and A-Kikuyu the East African highlands are believed to have been inhabited by an aboriginal hunting tribe—possibly the *Okiek*[2]—who may have been the ancestors of the Dorobo. If this is the case (and it would seem not improbable), my assumption that all Dorobo have not a common origin may have to be modified except as regards the *Balañga* and the *Kinyalañgat*, reference to whom will be found further on in these notes. These Dorobo differ patently from the others about whom I have collected information.

The *Okiek* are stated by Hobley to have been a scattered

[1] *A-Kamba and other East African Tribes*, C. W. Hobley (Cambridge, 1910).

[2] Sir Claud Hollis informs me that most Dorobo whom he has met call themselves *Okiek*. The name is unknown to me in this connection, but I do not assert that the Dorobo of Tanganyika Territory are ignorant of it. (See p. 306, s.v. "Tribe," *The Nandi; their Language and Folklore*, Sir C. Hollis.)

4:Huntingford E-5 (1938-1939) 1951 FL6 Dorobo FL6

The Social Institutions of the Dorobo

By G. W. B. Huntingford, B. Sc.

Contents:

I. Introduction
II. Kinship
1. The Third Ascending Generation
2. The Second Ascending Generation
3. The First Ascending Generation
4. Own Generation
5. The First Descending Generation
6. The Second Descending Generation
III. The Family and Behaviour
1. Family life
2. The Age-Set system
3. Behaviour
IV. The Clan
V. Marriage.
1. Circumcision
2. Pre-marital sex-life
3. Marriage
4. Birth
5. Adultery and divorce
6. Polygyny
7. Names
8. Marriage with Nandi

I. Introduction [1]

The Dorobo are a hunting people, primitive, shy, and elusive, who live in small groups scattered over the high forest lands of Kenya Colony and parts of northern Tanganyika Territory. They all speak dialects of Nandi, the vocabularies being more or less close to Nandi according to their distance from the Nandi area, and many of their customs and institutions

[1] This account of the Dorobo is based upon field work done in the Tindiret Forest area between May 1938 and November 1939 under a Leverhulme Research Fellowship. A previous visit I had made in 1927 was still remembered, and in 1938 I had little difficulty in renewing my acquaintance with the people, in which I was greatly helped by one Arap Mining, my guide in 1927, whose name is mentioned several times in the following pages. To his tact and knowledge is due any measure of success that I may have achieved.

I take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude to the Leverhulme organization for making the work possible, and to various people, notably Professor E. E. Evans-Pritchard and the late Dr. C. G. Seligman, for help and encouragement. I wish also to express my thanks to Messrs. G. A. Cockman and E. G. Whittall for their kindness to me when I was visiting the Dorobo in the neighbourhood of their farms.

The conditions described in the following pages are those which obtained up to the year 1940.

5:Huntingford E-5 (1938-1939) 1954 FL6 Dorobo FL6

a clear, windless sky. About 10 o'clock a curious whistling noise began to come from a certain part of the forest, and continued, on the same note, and without a break, for several hours. It was certainly no human or machine-made noise, and the Dorobo professed complete ignorance of it. A Nandi who had lived there before the Nandi War told me afterwards that it was an evil spirit whistling in the forest, "for we used to hear them whistling to each other like that in the forest when I was a child".

Between people and the things on which they depend for their existence both spiritual and material there is a connexion which is best expressed in terms of a ritual relationship. Things have a ritual value for people, and people themselves have a ritual status which is a relationship with their surroundings that can be altered for better or for worse according to the way in which they respect the ritual value of the things around them. Religion and magic form the procedure which protects these ritual values and status, while political organization is, in a sense, no more than an effort to maintain the ritual status of the horde in spite of the tendency of its members to injure their own ritual status and in consequence that of the horde also.

Certain things that a person does, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, cause deterioration of ritual status; but the original status may be recovered by the performance of certain ritual actions which may involve some personal effort or sacrifice. Examples of acts which cause loss of ritual status, and the means taken to restore it, are: (1) A girl who bears a child before marriage must have the undigested grass (*eiyat*) from the stomach of a goat rubbed over her face, neck, and breasts, and must then wash it off. (2) After a woman has given birth, she is in a condition of much reduced ritual status, and her husband must rub goat's fat and *eiyat* over her face, breasts, and belly. (3) A man who has killed a Dorobo must have goat's fat rubbed all over him. (4) One who has killed an enemy must have stripes of white earth painted on his face. In all these cases the people have done something which causes loss of ritual status, making them ritually unclean (*uuan* or *somis*) and so a source of danger to others till they have been purified. The potential danger is removed by means of something which has a ritual value. Moreover, an essential element in the cleansing process is sacrifice, that is, the use of the material must either involve giving up something which is valued, or it must require some effort or even risk to get hold of. The *eiyat* or fat must be from a domestic animal: if the person concerned has one, he must use it; if he has none, then he must get one, and without delay, which for a Dorobo usually meant that he had to steal it, and thus risk getting killed while doing so. Therefore there is an act of faith in these magico-religious performances, and people believe so firmly in the efficacy of what they do that they are prepared to risk danger in order to get the necessary materials. The use of white earth may entail no more than a journey to get it, but that still means a personal effort on somebody's part. Materials which are used for the restoration of ritual status, and in consequence have a special ritual value, include: the flesh of goats, which is eaten when twins are born, and in cases of incest; *eiyat*, the undigested grass from the stomach of a ruminant (a sheep

7: Wayland N-5 (ca. 1926) 1931 FL6 Dorobo FL6
Jiye FK8
Acholi FK4

PRELIMINARY STUDIES OF THE TRIBES OF KARAMOJA.[1]

(The Lalwor, The Wanderobo, the Dolotho and the Jie; with a note concerning the Karamojong.)

(With Plates XVIII—XXVIII.)

By E. J. Wayland.

DJA

1.—Introduction.

The following information was gathered by me in Karamoja, a district of the Eastern Province of the Uganda Protectorate, which I visited for the purpose of geological reconnaissance. As there are no motor roads in this district (or were none when I was last there) the transport is porterage, local natives being employed for this purpose; thus one is constantly in close touch with the people, and so it becomes possible to study, in some measure, their ways of living and their attitude towards life. But in order to understand more completely the manner of folk with which one is dealing, it is necessary to study not only the men as one knows them in one's caravan, but some of the families of which each man is the head or a member, and the relation in which families stand one to another, and to the villages and the clans, or other subdivisions of the tribe, and to learn of the occupations, spiritual beliefs, temporal authority and all other factors to which the people, by the community of their culture, are accustomed to respond. It may be impossible to achieve this end completely; and certainly few facts of any value, other than those obtained by direct observation, can be gathered unless the people feel the observer to be not only just in his dealings with them, but generously disposed towards their modes of thought and their tenets of behaviour.

DJA 114

DJA [121]

Even so, long residence among the people and a profound knowledge of their tongue are necessary before one can hope to receive that measure of confidence which permits of unreserved disclosure of intimate and sacred things. Moreover, there are mysteries known only to the select few, who may not divulge the secrets for any cause or pretext whatsoever, save that rigidly prescribed by tribal authority.

In these circumstances it would seem almost futile for one unacquainted with the language of the people, and resident in their country for a few months only, to attempt the task of grasping the essentials of local culture; especially so if (as in my case) the observer is no ethnologist. But the inevitable change that comes with Administration, be it never so gently and cautiously applied, is just beginning to creep over the country. It will be many years before these people

DJA [177]

[1] Nomenclature adopted—Karamoja = the district detailed on p. 180. Karamoja = the southern part of Karamoja. Karamojong = the name of the tribe inhabiting Karamoja. [104]

7: Wayland N-5 (ca. 1926) 1931 FL6 Dorobo FL6
Jiye FK8
Acholi FK4

J 415

In this connection it is interesting to note that when in Karamoja in 1920 I was told that on rare occasions stone vases, much the same in shape as the wooden ones described by Mr. Forsyth Thompson, are found in the Turkana country. Nobody, it is said, knows who made them, and they are seldom seen. I, for one, have not seen any. Perhaps it may not be altogether out of place to mention here the occurrence of ancient blue beads that are, from time to time, dug up by natives when cultivating the low ground near Mount Elgon (Masaba), on the extreme south-east of Karamoja, and that there are legends that seem to refer to a south-westerly migration of a people from the region of Abyssinia into Uganda some centuries ago. These people are said to have been the followers of one Zimba (a prince and brother to a reigning monarch) who during a sojourn in Buddu (in the Buganda Province), constructed those remarkable earthworks known as *Bigo Bya Mugenyi* (the strangers' fort). This legend, it may be added, can be connected very interestingly, but with what validity I know not, with the ruined buildings of the Zimbabwe type in Rhodesia.

J 172
J [174]
J 173

Concluding Remarks.

D A J 123

In collecting information, it was found that the tribes were not all equally willing to impart it, and considerable difficulty in this respect was experienced with the Wanderobo. Much of the procedure that is ethnologically interesting among the people is followed purely because it is customary, and more often than not none but the Elders have any knowledge of the esoteric significance of many of the acts of almost everyday performance. Moreover, the origin of some practices is lost in antiquity. The Elders, too, are suspicious of close enquiry. They have heard (from the Native troops of the K.A.R.) that elsewhere in the Protectorate the Government is doing its best to stamp out witchcraft, and they fear lest anything they say should render them suspect. On the other hand, the common people usually think it odd that there should be any reason behind long-established procedure; and if friendly disposed and not suspicious of the enquirer's motives, and if they are anxious to please, they will, when questioned, invent what seem to them probable explanations and announce these as fact. But theories differ as their makers, and in order to be helpful the people will often discuss matters among themselves to the purpose of coming to conclusions. The value of these is more than doubtful, and it is invariably best to arrive at results, if possible, by indirect methods. Leading questions must, of course, be avoided.

D [648] [754]

My enquiries led to the accumulation of a very large collection of notes, some of which proved valueless, while much of the remainder was contradictory. All the material was worked over, sorted, and the mutually compatible results discarded. The issue is not very encouraging; it is, however, better than nothing, and clearly indicates that the tribes of Karamoja are deserving of detailed study.

D A J 128

So far as positive results are concerned, it is extremely tempting to draw comparisons between them and those obtained by other investigators in neighbouring territories with a view to considering cultural origins and migrations, etc. It is wise, however, to leave this to the professed ethnologist. But phaps one may point out that some of the negative results are not entirely without interest. One may note, for instance, the absence of clan (totemic)

D A J 121 171

7: Wayland N-5 (ca. 1926) 1931 FL6 Dorobo FL6
Jiye FK8
Acholi FK4

organizations, rainstones, masks and ancestor figures (nor have the peoples of Karamoja any legend of the "Great Flood"). As nothing serious in the way of genealogy was attempted, the remoteness of these progenitors, whose ghostly visitations and "callings" are at times so disturbing, is not determinable, but I could not learn of ancestors whose generation was separated from that of the present by more than two others.

The smallness of the Anderobo tribe has been noted. It is maintained that "once upon a time" the tribe was much larger. There seems no reason to doubt this, and one naturally speculates with regard to the cause of this diminution of numbers. Want of adaptability seems likely to have been an important factor, and inspection of the lists of physical measurements included in this report suggests, but the suggestion may be deceptive, that in this case adaptability and physical variation are not entirely unconnected. The following table elucidates this point:—

Tribe.	Max. Dif. (in cm.) in Stature of Adult Males.	Max. Dif. (in cm.) in Stature of Adult Females.	Dif. in Stature Maxima between Adults of both Sexes.	Dif. in Stature Minima between Adults of both Sexes.	Dif. of Max. Stature of Males over Min. of Females. (Adults.)	Dif. of Max. Stature of Females over Min. of Males. (Adults.)
Dodoth	27·5					
Jie	23·3	19·3	23·5	11·7	45·0	7·6
Labwor	23·9	19·6	6·6	6·6	36·7	17·1
Wanderobo	13·4	7·2	2·6	2·6	19·6	19·6

Both the social and the economic ranges of the Dorobo are very narrow. The family is a self-supporting unit, and a group of families forms a social unit; but the group is isolated, and the groups cohere through their strong clan solidarity and strict exogamy. There is no "tribe" as e.g. the Nandi, but a collection of family or clan groups forming a *koret* or district, and a collection of such groups within a given area having a common organization, customs, and dialect, and the innate idea that "we are the Dorobo of such-and-such a place." Thus the Kapchep-kendi Dorobo (with whom this paper deals) distinguish themselves from the Dorobo living on Tindiret hill, though that hill is only some seven miles from Sosoiyo. (See map of the Dorobo country.) Before the Government dispersed them, the Dorobo possessed, more or less undisturbed, the whole of the forest. Now they have no land at all. But they maintain their solidarity in spite of disruption, by means of their isolation, strong clan-system, and the fact that outsiders, e.g. the Nandi, are half afraid of them (so long as they do not go into Nandi), as being rainmakers and magicians of no mean ability, a people who are, in fact, somewhat uncanny. Their external relations may be described under three heads as (1) acquisitional: exchange of goods and services with the Nandi, and, till about 80 years ago, with the Vasin Gishu Masae; (2) restrictive: the Government raids them for taxes, and takes away their land, which leads to (3) an attitude of deep suspicion towards all Europeans, though they are driven by economic pressure to work for them.

Productive activities are concerned with the following:

A. *Food*: meat (by hunting and trapping), honey, wild plants, eleusine and maize (grown or obtained), milk, maize meal, salt and beer.

B. *Non-edible*: houses, weapons, implements, utensils, clothing and ornaments (except of iron), firewood, traps, honey-barrels, coloured earth (which is dug in the eastern part of the forest and sold to the Nandi for cash.)

C. *Raw Materials*: wood, plants, and skins.

The exchange of their own products for things they do not make is governed by natural resources,

/229/ Third Part

I.

M 184 [179] The Wandorobo of the three branches of the Masai people.

The customs of the Wakuafi are in general identical with those of the Masai, and where a slight difference appears in one or another of their colonies, it is to be traced back solely to the influence of the M [128] neighboring sedentary Negro tribes. Such deviations are therefore not peculiar to the Masai people as a whole, and a discussion of them would go beyond the compass of the present study. On the other hand, it is necessary to go into more detail on the customs and practice of M D 121 the Wandorobo belonging to the Masai people, who, in their timid seclusion, have maintained themselves quite without foreign influ- D [179] ence (1).

1. With the exception of such by the Tatoga, a tribe anthropologically very close to the Masai people.

and to present the differences shown by a comparison with the customs of the Masai, as well as to substantiate the correspondence in the main points.

M D 101 184 We have seen that members of all three branches of the Masai people fall under this name (2).

2. In what follows nothing will be said about the Wandorobo not belonging to the Masai people, who are seen, mixed with Tatoga and Masai, as remnants of an extinct Semite people -- who embraced the sun cult.

D 101 The Asá stem from the oldest epoch, the El aiti from the middle one, and the El gasurek from the most recent one (3).

3. The other designations with which the Wandorobo of the individual districts name themselves have geographical meaning.